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SONGS TOWARD THE SUNLIGHT

HANFORD CHASE JUDSON





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SONGS TOWARD
THE SUNLIGHT

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BY
HANFORD CHASE JUDSON
"



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1913

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To My Mother

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SONGS TOWARD
THE SUNLIGHT

Many of the verses contained in this volume are here published for the first time. A few, however, have previously appeared in *Scribners' Magazine*, *Outlook* and the *Springfield Republican*. The author acknowledges to these his appreciation of the privilege to reproduce them here.

SONG OF THE SOUTH WIND

Lo, I blow across the meadows that are brown
and sear with winter;
And the grass grows green around me, full of
joy to see me pass.
Then I get a banquet ready for the young bee,
wing unsteady,
And I blow two hearts together, of a man and
of a lass.

Soft my hand is on the harp-strings of the for-
est in the summer,
And, with modulated music, I have lulled the
world to sleep.
By the pool the sunbeam brightens, where the
water lily whitens,
At the open doors of dreamland, I, my noon-
tide vigil, keep.

When the Norns, relentless, weaving, spin the
autumn spell of dreaming,
And my spirit feels the burden of the sleep in-
ducing haze;
When the withered leaves together whirl as in
a mad endeavor
To regain the twinkling gladness of the breeze-
fanned summer days;

When the thrush his farewell tuneth, sad as
life's lament for Balder,
While the purple tint of sunset on the crimson
hillside dies,
Then I turn me; yet my sorrow reaches out-
ward toward to-morrow—
I have buried springtime's treasure; yet remem-
ber where it lies.

THE ABANDONED FARM

Up on the hillside, companioned by loneliness,
stands

The deserted farmhouse. Grasses tall,
Marjoram, meadow sweet, heal-all,
Grow around it. On rickety doorstep fall
Rose petals plucked by the passing hours with
unseen hands.

Mute relics, untenanted, cowpen and barn are
near,

Falling in ruin. The grape vine at will
Crawls on the ground. The place is still
For the passing of winds, the house wren's trill,
And the song of the vesper sparrow, spiritual,
sweet and clear.

Thin echoes only are keeping the dwelling.

The hearth

Is bitter with ash. And naught that belongs
To a home can be found; they are gone, the
bright throngs,

The loves, the sorrows, the laughs and the
songs

Of those who once lived here and died, or are
scattered over the earth.

Beyond meadows, the dark thunder horses
loom. The leaves

Turn whites to the wind. In the gathering
gloom,

The many-faced lightning peers into each room
Of the grey, barren house that naught can
illumine.

When the storm passes off, there's a solemn
drip from the mossy eaves.

'Tis evening, 'tis twilight; the whip-poor-will's
 voice afar
Awakes in the glen. Soon the answer springs
From the meadow; then every dark interval
 brings
Nearer the never-seen tribe, till it sings
Round the house for awhile and is gone, 'neath
 the sky-flame, the bright evening star.

THE MULLEIN STALK

Beside the shabby quarter's dusty street,
Between the gutter and the stony walk
That echoes aimlessly to human feet,
Dawn out, night in, there grows a mullein stalk
Of dusty green and most plebeian name—
Its gnarled top made bright by yellow flame.

Perhaps a child may bend it down to smell
The perfume—if it has one—of the flower;
We others pass, and there is none to tell
That, famished, we have left a living dower.
Joyless, we pass heaven by in sightless mood;
Thin, hungry souls that faint for living food.

Did God not know that man was made of
 clay,
Weak-willed and foolish, ever seeking life,
Yet ever in his seeking led astray,
Giving the bread of peace for bitter strife,
Selling his soul to be by failure lashed,
He'd stand behind His beauty's flame abashed.

THE NEW AGE OF ROMANCE

I.

Spring broke to-day our icy gyves of cold;
This wind has lingered long in lands of palm,
And bringeth to New York the warming balm
On wings alight with summer's living gold.

The city drips with melting snow;
'Tis late, but still the sunbeams show,
In many joyous ways
Beside their slant across the street's blue haze,
That summer in her sun-light golden car,
Swept on by gladsome crowds
Of birds and tinted clouds,
Is coming,—and is even now not far.

A quick street-filling throng of men and teams
Busy themselves like ants to bear away
Cold February's drifts; while on them streams
The beauty and the warming light of May.

And everywhere that sunlight fills
With cosy warmth the nooks and sills,
I see bright summer's gleaming spies;
They look at me with laughing eyes.
With laughing eyes they well may look;
They bait with dreams a golden hook—
I hear the palm-green islands call.
Wee anglers, ye've a cunning art!
I've swallowed bait and hook and all,
The hook is tugging at my heart!

I see the purple huts and foamy beach
Where deep the ocean swells;
I see grand Fuji Yama's heavenward reach;
I hear the clink of Chinese garden bells.
Hung from celestial trees,
Dream-voiced, they note the breeze.
Scented-like lovely Sita's hair,

There comes a breath of evening air,
In sweet Ceylon, its robes have trailed through
groves,
And lap me round with blossom scent of cloves,
I see the Taj Mahal as white as snow,—
 Pale sorrow's perfect shrine,—
I see the stony shapes, grotesque, that grow
 On that all fruitful vine
That round Benares' temples old doth twine.
The wander-wine is at my lips;
And, east or west, the golden street
Is but a coaxing to my feet;
For, east or west, there waits a ship—
A this-world ship with plank and spar,
 A captain and a crew,
A ship just in from ports afar
 And booked for places new.
At dusk they'd tow us down the bay,
And in the solemn gloom of night
We'd leave Atlantic Highlands light
 To glimmer far away.
Then, rocking 'neath the stars, we'd creep
Far out upon the great Alone,
The wonder-filled, the little known,
The timeless sea, the snowy eye-browed deep.

I hear the song, O sea,
Thine islands sing to me;
The pulse of spring in all my veins I feel,
 Calling, Away, away!
 Hearken, O sea, I stay,
Kept, not by knowing thou dost not reveal
To him who seeks illusive gleams
Across thy foam the land of dreams;
 For longing in me doth belie
 The wisdom. O, I would be free.
Green palms above the snow I see

Fair islands all around me lie.
Beyond the roofs, the sky is blue.
A cloud, shot through with sunset's gold,
Seems a great billow. Breaking through
Its shadowed silver, I behold
The Argo. All its swinging oars
Uplift it where the billow pours
Its foam, and then it fades away—
Mist-shrouded, into even grey.

II.

O Argo! In thy happy time approved
By gods and men was the brave call that moved
 The stalwart sons of Greece
 To seek the golden fleece.
Lo, night to cheer them on their way
Beyond the purple bourne of day
Unrolled the wonder scripture of the stars.
 Pricked out in fire divine,
 They saw the annals shine
With fates of tragic loves and holy wars.
 Orion and the Pliades,
 The keeper and the keeper's bear
 They saw, and grandly pictured there
 The god-like deeds of Hercules.
Above their heads in burning script was shown
That mortal man might win a starry throne.
So on through rain of salty spray
The buoyant Argo climbed the steep
Of billows on its eastward way
To Colchis o'er the hoary deep.

And what did Thracian shepherds see
When, twixt the blue and silver-grey,
The Argo passed, at break of day,
As fair as any dream could be?
They saw dawn's radiant arms enfold

And crown it with a wreath of gold.
The sail was Tyrian in hue
And, like a swan's, its breast was white.
The oar blades flashed away the light
And like a swan it swam the blue.
It was a vision to surprise
And light a shepherd poet's eyes.
They wondered what it did presage;
The gods seemed on a pilgrimage.

III.

Fair as some memory of youth, now gone,
That breaks, unbidden, on an hour forlorn,
O, joyous Argo, did the same sun's beam
That now is setting ever dawn on thee?
Or wast thou never but a golden dream
Sent by some poet forth upon the sea
Of human longing, marvelously fair,
The measure of his sorrow and despair?

Nay, thou wert real and cleaved the briny wave
On many a lengthened voyage to far climes,
And brought rich cargoes home. Then later
times,
Built better ships, that greater tonnage gave
And higher speed. Drawn up upon the shore,
Years came and went, but thou didst go no more;
Springs came and warmly breathed upon the
snow,
And all the world grew green. The ocean blue
Gave back the glad-winged halcyons that flew
Flashing above thee in the sun's bright glow.
And often when the upward reaching tides
Came curling in around thy battered sides,
Dream-whispers faintly bade thee once more
fare
Forth on the sea in search of old-time joys,

Thee, doomed to rot and only fit to bear,
On voyages, imaginative boys.

Then did a poet pass who understood
How in life's pod the seed was quick and good.
He freed thee, sent thee forth a vision bright,
To sail forever in unclouded light—
A joy that never is and yet might be,
The cherished hope of hearts while hearts are
young.

It might have been the self same bard who sung
Of life's bright golden age and Sicily,
When Palas' eyes were like the skies,
And Artemis had pale gold curls;
When sweetest of the golden three
Was Kore, when they all were girls.
O, what a joyous youth had they
To last an endless summer's day!

IV.

Life has a great capacity for joy;
For, let the canvas darken, still doth live
The painter instinct, eager to employ
More gladsome tints of green and gold and give
Sweeter dream pictures to affirm the truth
Of Eden—Enna—life's immortal youth.

Here, in New York, 'tis night and cool.
Once more has miser Winter sealed
His snowy treasure, and congealed
The waste in many an icy pool.
And down the side street's gold-lit mirk,
Dark bobbing shadows come and go
Of hurried toilers still at work
Around the carts and heaps of snow.
How sharp the acid arc-light frees
Against night's plate these tragedies!

A clutched-at job, a loaf of bread,
That wife and children may be fed.
Hunger will knock again to-morrow.
Life has a great capacity for sorrow.

Yet even for this city of bright skies,
Bright seaside skies with changing deeps of
blue,

The heavens grow wonderful with purple hue,
Soft, rich and deep, peace giving to mine eyes.

They overbend the square,
Above whose entrance fair
The arch, by the Republic set, doth rise
In high triumphal state;
A marble monument,
Built to commemorate

Its great, unselfish Father President;
That we who pass might keep in memory
The noble deeds from which our lifehassprung,
Though, at this darkling hour, I cannot see

The lofty tablets hung,
Treasuring love and wisdom from his tongue.

Here, far away, I see the brave camp fires
Lighted against oppression by our sires.
Yet even here hope falters. In these days
Do we still bear the standard they did raise?

V.

Beams, from the bright republic of the stars,
On snowy roofs and arch and square
And wintry world, bathed in clear, silver air,
A gold-fringed eye, the living planet Mars.
We know not of thy life, O living star,
Whether like ours or no; thou art so far.
But O, our twilight comrade, thou dost ope
New doors for us to silver fields of hope.

Earth, like fair Desdemona, dreams of thee,
Bright, living planet Mars!
Across the magic twilight she doth see
A stirring epic written in thy scars,
Thy glorious adventures. What fierce wars
Lie buried under love-sweet bloom,
Along thy great canals and niggard springs
Of water, won by sacrifice, that brings
Thee strength to hold, at quite arm's length,
doom?
Hast thou not now put by the pomp of gold
From need of love and lovelike streams that
hold
Within thee for awhile the joyous breath
To sing of love with? Can we doubt that death
Has lost for thee its sting, so closely known?
Here we are blind and ignorant of life;
Our heart within itself is still at strife;
Here each man toileth for himself alone.

VI.

Yes, happy is the man who finely spoke
When telescopes thy glorious life had found!
Blest family of men! Like a great oak
It rains rich acorns on the fertile ground.

A poet, scholars, leaders, these
Have been its golden fruit. Among the trees
Of the Republic's continent-wide grove,
It is of that first setting out that throve,
A type, our native bark, strong limbed and tall!
Yes, we have many such; we need them all.
For there is much to do. Oh, what shall be,
America, thy future joy in these,

Thy worthy, fruitful trees?
Fair native land, bright be thy destiny!
With such, and thy new saplings every year,
Thou art assured of love, hast naught to fear!

VII.

But thou, O individual, alone,
What hast thou for thyself that can atone
For all that thou dost suffer? Art thou one
With those bestirring early, while the dawn
Still shows its crimson wings, and field and lawn
Are dew-drop silvered, ere the coming sun
Imperiously shoots the gleaming ray
That lays command on all: Awake, 'tis day?
Then thou dost know the eager joy that stirs
Our human kind—God's young adventurers.

And this green earth, with frost at either pole,
This world, whose heart is still so warm and
bright,

This winking, eager eye of day and night,
This handful of gold time, O living soul,
This is thine Argo. In it thou art bound,
O'er the immensity
Of life's great sea,
Until thy quest be found.

Smite hard the stormy waves though they be
steep;

To thee, to me, shall come
The golden bringing home,

When we shall hear the "Welcome thou," of
sleep,

And leave our traveler's oft wearied breath
Between the quiet knees of high-throned Death.

For there no want shall bind our eyes,
When the sweet sun doth rise,
Gilding the columned dome
Of our paternal home,

Far yonder 'twixt the oceans and the skies.

ODE ON BEAUTY, THE AWAKENER

I.

This morn, with no unlavish hand, the Giver
Pours golden day from the cerulean East.
A flood of life and gladness like a river
Seems washing all the world. A scented feast
Is yonder meadow for the glad-eyed herd,
Browsing, nose-hid, in clover and green grass;
And in the leafy glen a lyric bird
 Will let the moment pass
 Beneath his golden spray,
But he will load it with some ringing treasure
 In such full-throated measure,
That burdened time can bear it not away;
 And so it lingers still and sings
 Again in sweet of growing things,
 And fills the place where from the pool's
 Green, mossy rim, the silver spill
 On spattered rocks below doth fill
 The air with sound that cools.

I see the sunlight on the grass;
I hear the wood thrush, clear and sweet;
The airs that through the garden pass
Seem breathed by bygone years and greet
My sense as though to wake in me
Some half-forgotten memory.
I see ye smiling on your stalks;
Have gone mad, ye hollyhocks?
 Whence is this heavenly joy?
O, golden sunlight, do I stand
Beneath the blue of the fairyland;
 I am not now a boy?

II.

O seldom has such gladness welled
Within me, or my eyes beheld
 A sight so sweet and fair;
And why, when all the world doth ring
With joy, should thought of sorrow bring
 A sense so like despair?
Yet as the sultry noontide lays
On far-off hills a veil of haze
That hides their glory, so upon my heart
Is laid a passing grief, as though a dart
Had pierced me and the bleeding slowly healed.
 No longer garden, wood and field
 Rejoice in light of Eden sweet;
And all my comfort is that soon my feet
Must cityward return, although, "Alas,"
Murmurs my soul, as one who, having known
 Such light as late had shone,
Goes forth into a world whose heaven is brass,
Who, growing old, the best of life must leave.

III.

Now sweet hope bids me cease to grieve,
Saying that this, life's Eden, does not pass
Like innocence or joyous youth that knows
Naught of life's deeper joys on its birth throes;
But grows more bright in sorrow. Sorrow gives
This promise to the heart that bravely lives,—
A gleam of wonder never dreamed by youth.
And gave it not those openings of truth
 And intuitions deep that led
 The lonely Israelite who fed
The flocks of Jethro forty years and came
Ever more near the strangely living flame
 And wondrous, unexpected hour
God wakened him and sent him forth, a power?

If life gives sorrow, sorrow beauty gives;
Beauty again gives soul by which man lives,
And none on earth's most fertile plain
Lives severed from the mystic chain
That binds this world to God.
Lo, under starlight's silver rain,
The tree of life grows green again
Where quiet dreams have trod,
Though mind remember not. And though
bright day,
The flaming falchion bearer, bar the way,
Yet not by bread alone
Is human life sustained and given increase—
Our birth was there in Eden; we have known,
With keener strife than Nature's, deeper peace.

IV.

Under the sun-lit, tropic clime,
In the deep hollows of the sea,
Dim and warm,
Where the even flow of time
Is not noticed, lives a swarm
Of wee builders, coral polips, leaving silently
Cells as white as rime.
And still they build their marble homes
Over empty catacombs,
Until an island rises free;
Yet through the dim, untroubled hours
Of their lives there comes no gleam
From the island; never dream
Visits them of light, of flowers,
Of palms, majestic in their upward reach
Or long-winged combers curling on the beach.

V.

O, not by bread alone
Is human life sustained and given increase.
Behold this weight of marble, this cold stone,
This winged Nike from the isles of Greece.

A strange, ethereal flame
Quicken its graceful limbs and glistens through
Its never wearied wings. Across the blue,
Fluttering, to the marble prow it came,
A witness, like an angel, sent to show
A more abundant life and joy.
Defacing time cannot destroy
Its beauty, for its every line doth glow.
Living, it giveth life
Above the petty strife
Of mortals that the pangs of hunger know.

VI.

Through this abounding life within,
Man is a conqueror;
Not charms of dalliance can win
Nor weariness deter,
For in its service, 'tis his fate
To labor early, labor late;
His ships leap out across the sea;
His furnaces make red the hills;
The echo of his industry,
The hollow heaven fills.
Not even the unstable air
Can daunt this mighty traveller.

VII.

Who would build bridges for applause alone?
Who would build ships to bound across the sea,
If men desired to tarry? How should be
The wide-spread, open prairies plowed and
sown,

If hunger that must still be fed
Came not our children's playground near,
If plowmen, risking weather, did not hear
The far appeal of nations needing bread?
Blind labor kills; it even seems to soil
The very soul: use is the mead of toil.

VIII.

Love sets the heart of youth on fire
To leave some lasting good for man;
Its beauty stirs him to aspire,
Perhaps with well-made bridge to span
Some danger flood. Soon he doth find
That, if he would at all succeed,
He, under ruthless heel, must grind
Life's deadly viper worms of greed.
But O, too often with them bleed
Unheeded loves and so he loses ruth.
By slow degrees he groweth old;
The levers of his heart grow cold,
Until he counts his gains as life's enduring truth.

The poet from his watch-tower life austere
Looks forth upon the world beneath the sun,
A seer of great deeds and when is done
Some deed the spirit's life revealing,
With blithely cadent voice,
His golden trumpet, loudly pealing,
Bids all who hear rejoice
That through the cinders' arid dearth,
Between the giant knees of toil,
The roots of life, still finding soil,
Keep fresh our human beauty on the earth.
And thus he husbands life; for life is seed,
And to increase, it must be widely sown.
If but the song on whose blue wings 'tis blown
Come with the joy of springtime, hearts will heed

And quicken into green. The soul doth need
The uplift more than use. No tower, no dome
Can satisfy the inner need of man.

For though his hands must build, his heart must
plan;

In nothing mortal can he make his home.

So, by the builder wise, the dome is given
A columned lightness whispering of heaven;
And, from his hands, the tower in beauty seems
As though it grew, a building out of dreams.

Life's plan is only life; the deed that shows
A living soul that bravely through it glows,
Life catches from the all-engulfing deep
And gathers safe in beauty's arms of gleam,
Where the bright joys of endless morning
stream,
Where time is laid asleep.

Look in the city square; beneath the green
Of drooping, leafy trees, where checkered shade
And golden light on walk and bench are laid,
The statue of a hero may be seen,
Nobly conceived and made.

The admiral and sculptor both are dead;
But ageless here the statue still doth stand,
And the great admiral's uplifted head
Is stamped immortally with brave command.
Even the wave that lifts the buoyant stone
Is felt beneath his feet; the salty breeze
That stirs his hair and rolls his coat is shown,
Though breathless all around him hang the
trees.

Scant heed is given by the passersby;
But to the urchin who, with eager eye,
Looks up the noble presence to admire,
The statue lives and bids his soul aspire.

IX.

O, more than rubies red, or yellow gold,
By cold Alaskan rivers found, are worth
 To cities of the earth,
Good statues by which human worth is told.
But O, the pity, if the statue takes
No beauty from the thing it represents.
It standeth cold and of itself it wakes
 No love or reverence;
For man's heart clings to beauty. Lo, we find
This memory, deep in the city's mind,
 Of life's immortal youth;
This leafy gem, this tulip planted square,
 This altar green to truth,
 Cherished and made more fair—
The city's inmost self. That great, crude heart
Here pulses all day long in endless flow
Of traffic, borne from terminal and mart;
Across it there's a ceaseless come and go.
Yet, pause beside the fountain's rise and fall.
 Whom do its ripples call?
There, over leafy twigs, a tower doth fill
Its corner with a touch of old Seville;
Here, like America, upbuilded fair,
A tower looks forth from columns high in air
 And golden crowned.
Hark, as the hour awakes, upon the square
Sifts quietly the solemn dew of sound;
 Through far-off streets there swells
 The chime of bells.
What presence through the open window floats,
 By whom sweet peace is given?
The fairy queen and her attendant notes,
 On their way back to heaven.

X.

Men raise their buildings as they will; yet see!
How oft from churchyard, court or bend,
Great steps for giant feet ascend
From roof to roof, with all the majesty
Of titan cities in the land of dream.

And here and there, and over all
The buildings, snowy plumes of steam,
Like ribbon banners, rise and fall.
They float away, and still they stay:—
It is some festival.

The city, wonderful and new,
It cannot hold; it sets me free.

Come, take this upward flight with me,
One last great step, the next step is the blue.

XI.

I know the rose will last a day;
That towers and domes will pass away;
That statues, flake by flake, will rust;
That all the songs her poets gave
To Greece, and statues, could not save
Her kingdoms from the dust;
That Pergamus, though Satan's seat,
Was glorious with garlands sweet,
Of marbles owning grace divine;
For still the fragments of them shine,
And each to us of heaven's beauty sings.
Quick, lay thy hand upon these lesser strings;
Their trembling hush:—
No eye in Greece, 'mid all her beauteous things,
Beheld the burning bush.

LAURELS

Lo, I beheld, in vision or in dream,
A place of wonder, near a hoary wall,
Pierced by a gate. The inner world with gleam
Was hidden, while a softened light did fall
Outside, as sifted through the living gold
Of a grove's tree-tops, wind-swept, mystic, old,
That towered a joyous wave, and broke in
sheen

Of mist, behind the mossy wall between
Green earth and heaven. My soul knew well
the place,

Fair courts of her whose three times lovely face
I had not seen, being unclean and blind.
Down to the world from it a path doth wind,
Seeking the feet of men. Soon, on the air,
Far-heard, yet sweet, arose this tuneful prayer:

“America, fair native land,
Reach up again and, with no grudging hand,
Pluck from thy sacred grove its living boughs:
For thou must twine to-day
Another wreath of bay,
A wreath with pointed leaves for Peary's
brows.
Choose the green sprigs with care;
Let it be bright and fair
As the twin wreaths that thou didst lately twine
To crown with leaf divine
Thy sons who won dominion in the air.

“As thine own eagle soars
Where the red morning pours,
Drawing against the sky a noble ring,
The quick-eyed Wrights have found,
Upspringing from the ground,

That man may safely soar on buoyant wing
But now thou needest other bays;
Another deed demands thy praise.

“Not that thy sisters come with sparkling eyes
To greet thee on his glorious emprise,
Nor that he did explore
A field untrod before—
What is it, of itself, to find the pole?
'Tis for no easy thing
Performed, the praises ring;
The laurel still is sacred to the soul.

“Man has no lasting breath;
Soon is he touched by death,
Soon must we all explore the boundless night.
Deeds that brave men achieve
Still lead us to believe
Our hope as though they left a star alight.
And God for crowning such has given
His golden bays from groves of heaven.”

It ceased. At once another voice was sent
That, coming on quick wings of discontent,
As an accuser asked, “Why laurels here?
Though these be noble deeds, the heart of life
Grows tragically deep. In endless strife,
Brave thousands pass unscathed through want
and fear.
To them, in truth, God's golden leaves are due.
And would you crown the few?

“The Greeks, bright sun-lit children of the
day's
Azure and gold, might well reward with bays
The stalwart victor in each game,
Who, in Apollo's or in Zeus's name,

The trophy bore away.
For, whether plucked from leaf divine
That grew by Delphi's marble shrine,
Or plucked from olive, parsley, oak, or pine,
The crowning still was a religious rite.
Apollo, ruling in his golden pale,
Reached out to none beyond the misty veil.
We have inherited both day and night;
Our bays must last, although the sun from
sight
Must be consumed with all the starry host.
And think you, Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Bend down heaven's sacred trees
Even for deeds like these?"

"For deeds like these?" He who first spoke
replied,
So quickly, pained surprise could barely hide
Under his words. "Are they not such as try
The soul through all its strengths? Grim
wastes of snow,
Full-filled of gloom and desolation, lie
Hemming it in, or smother blizzards blow
Howling in many a maniacal note,
While deadly cold
Its bitter spear doth hold,
Relentless, waiting, at the body's throat.
There every step is but a new free will
That keeps its chosen good in spite of ill.

" 'Murmur the winds? Soon they will shout
aloud,
'Turn back, the snow is winding a white
shroud.'

" 'Does the cold silence utter forth no sound?
'Turn back, no eye will look upon thy mound.'

“ ‘Is the aurora flashing bright and clear?
Do wondrous streamers, green and ruby, wave?
‘Thus have they flung their tints from year to
year,
Thus ever shall, above thy nameless grave.’

“This heard and heeded not, upon a path,
Bitter to follow, proves a mystery.
The man is dust; for him Life never hath
Crowned any deed, but that itself might be
Through time made manifest. God does not
lack

Glory to cheer His saints in Paradise;
But laurels, to encourage mortal eyes,
Are given with heaven’s gleam, and render back
Their light to Life. Yet, when the leaf divine
Crowns any deed, the doer, too, must shine.”

The cold Accuser even this withstood,
Asking, like one who feeds a sceptic mood,
“And is all free will love in exercise?
Love growing stronger? fitting life to fill
That end, religion’s golden hope, that lies,
Vaguely, for all these years, above us still?
Then twine it wreaths; but are wreaths needed
here?

This age has grown
Wise through experience; the pole brought near
By many who have sought it without fear,
And the way thither shown.
Perhaps an even higher meed is due
The many lying there in graves unknown.
And would you crown the few?

“Hearken! not unexpectedly we hear
A voice from the cold South. ’Tis telling clear
That Amundsen for Norway has attained

Earth's other pole and a like honor gained.
That this achievement on the shining heels
Of the first comes so quickly, but reveals
 The time as ripe for such, the age
 As rich in clever means to hold
 The body's warmth against the cold
 Of Arctic winter and assauge
The rigours of the dash across the ice.
So, with high honors, will it not suffice
 That, through the golden sweep of time,
 Each northward looking eye shall see
The gallant Roosevelt with spars of rime
Outlined against the drear immensity
Of whirling storm or moonlight, silver-blue?
And far beyond it, where the bright stars swing
Around Polaris, on earth's smallest ring,
Peary, in fury hood, will break in view?
Or southward, see the no less gallant Fram,
Hostage of winter, locked amid the jam
Of frozen ice floes, the dark season through;
While Amundsen is, with his hardy crew,
Beyond the pallid mountain tops that rise,
Like titan spectres, toward mysterious skies?
Nobly achieving, each attained his pole.
Could they have done it merely for the soul?"

The question lay like lead upon my heart,
When, over seas, spake thus a voice apart,
Full toned, like England's, yet in mourning,
 low:—

"My stalwart sons lie buried in the snow.
My hands have built a cairn in the cold zone
For Scott and for his men; but one—
 Alone the bitter winds of winter know
Where Oaks is laid. And the last words he
 spoke
Add to my honor. O, my hearts of oak!"

My worthy Captain Scott! His record fine,
With the fair pages of my youth will shine;
But, O, it shows how great a loss is mine."

Then, lo, the holy silence near me broke
In music as the hermit thrush's sweet.
Love made me tremble; for a clear voice spoke,
Sending this message forth with winged feet:—
"Nay, they are worthy of the mighty womb
 That in days recent bore
 Them equal to thy best of yore,
Mother of nations honored by their tomb.
And thou, so wont to seek the lion's share
Of glory, in their ill success
Art become first, if still thy heart doth bless
The spiritual light of romance fair.
Victors have crowns; but those who nobly fail
Are like the saints; they comfort and renew.
The grim-eyed fates that could not make them
 quail,
Weighed light as chaff 'gainst what they tried
 to do,
Make its true greatness plain. And though
 we see
The haggard faces 'neath the meager shed,
Under the driving storm, ere hope has fled.
And Oaks, who, knowing that there still may be
Some chance without him, and with weakened
 hand,
Holding aside the curtain fringed with rime,
Turns, bravely saying to the little band,
'I'm stepping out and may be gone some time,'
Ere, deaf to all dissuasion, he doth go
Out in the storm, now wraith-like clad in snow,
Now seen no more. And they who with calm eyes
Watch the storm's lengthened hours until hope
 dies;

Our spirits catch a voice that hails with cheer;
And Oaks is coming back, his forehead bright
With summer poured from azure soft and
 clear,
Behind him, brooks and meadows, bathed in
 light,
Love calls it home, that travelers hold dear."

It ceased. The Doubter, not yet satisfied,
Once more, though now half-heartedly, replied:
"Such things make this age rich; but do they
 show
The immortality of life?"

 "Life needs,"
This, ringing sweetly, did the voice bestow,
"No proof while it is active. While it heeds
The spirit's trumpet call, the living glow
Goes with it, and it walks through mundane
 things
As though 'twere canopied by golden wings.
Man is, in action, greater than he knows,
And, careless often, scornful of the soul;
This age is nobly seeking many a pole,
 A splendid life it shows.
Great actions—they are born beyond the sun—
Elude the guerdon, slip away from praise.
If the age give the doer gold or bays,
The age but takes its part in what is done."

THE NATION

Though by the great world's hoary years,
The years that thou hast known seem few,
Thou wast but wise; life doth renew
Its youth in thee. Red, white and blue,
Shot up above thy head appears,
Life's flag of love and blood and tears.

A golden crown to life's first youth
God's fatherhood did symbolize;
But thou wast born with clearer eyes,
And seeing that the crown denies
Too oft God's justice, love and ruth,
Grew up and found a higher truth.

Thou didst not welcome eagerly
Life's disillusion. Thou didst guess
Little of how, the wilderness,
Through thee, all other lands should bless.
Behind, lay heart break's salty sea,
Before thee, life's reality.

Yet, if life truly be worth while,
Then is life's highest truth the best.
Though fears forbid the soul the quest
For truth by which alone 'tis blest.
Far more than dreams it can beguile
Our lips to frame a human smile.

The starry flag that ripples sweet
Above thee is life's brighter crown,
Its richer pageant and renown.
Lo, princes come and lavish down
Laurels of praise both just and meet
For thee, green treasures round thy feet.

AN ODE ON BREAKING THROUGH

I.

I saw my evening star, grown dimly red,
Sink down among the dark, devouring pines
That clutched it on the hills. "Now beauty's
dead,"

My spirit cried, "and though heaven faintly
shines
With embers from the altar, round my brow
I feel the heavy wreath that failure twines.

"Beauty is dead, is dead," I cried, "and now,
Day that awakes all youthful hearts to joy
Will show me to my shame. O spirit thou

Hast left me naked! Who shall now destroy
My gods of hell that oft by thee were driven
Back to the void? What shall my pain alloy?
Thou wast my present, thou my future heaven."

II.

And no forgetfulness I found in sleep,
For light was gone, and ugly visaged dreams
Passed my unguarded doors. I heard the
sweep

Of Sorrow's weeds about my house, whose
beams
Creaked under heavy darkness. Reason slept,
And all my guard was that dull sight that deems

That life is as it sees it. No thought kept
Apart from me the vampire, Fear, that preyed
Upon my helpless soul. Above me swept

The clouds of hell that I, myself, had made,
That I might know the joy that beauty gave me,
Its colors brightened by contrasting shade;
And not a star shone down from heaven to save
me.

III.

Then breaking from the east, the golden flame
Of morning lit my window; it was day.
And donning scorn that I might bear my shame,

I started out; but ever in my way
My eyes beheld, as in reflecting glass,
A darker self that held me as at bay,

A backward walking bitterness. Alas,
Love could not go with scorn and it was plain
What I should be, if love should from me pass,

By this, my shadow self that knew no pain.
Nor could I down the shadow till, despairing,
I heard a voice that cried, "You strive in vain;
Its strength is in the robe that it is wearing."

IV.

"What, must I travel naked," then I cried,
"And bend my back beneath the rods of scorn?"
"Yes, you must travel naked," Truth replied.

"No coward enters through the gates of morn
Aflame with beauty; nor do seekers run
Bravely from their own quest. Would you
adorn

Your life with the live joy of heaven, yet shun
Earth, where its seed is sown, to dream at ease?
Faugh, you would make a brave Endymion.

Mortals attain to life but by degrees,
By piercing through death that doth surround
it.

He must besiege some hell who hopes to seize
The crown of beauty; there the Master found
it."

V.

Then I, of warlike race and winter born,
Took the humility of those who turn
The other cheek, and was a thing forlorn

That, scorning, I, myself, would from me spurn.
Then came a voice of laughter on the wind
That mocked me through the leaves and made
me burn

With deep contempt for all I sought to find—
God, beauty, love and all that tongue can name.
“Henceforth,” I cried, “I shall not leave be-
hind

Or fear or joy, or love or hate or shame,
But take them all and shun and shunning, flee-
ing.”

And lo, once more the light of beauty came
And I remembered only plenteous being.

VI.

At bright of noon there fell on the dry street
A flash from silent heaven that thrilled my
sight.

Unnoticed 'mid the throngs it burst and, fleet

As levin, it was gone. But still its light,
Sheathed in the sunshine, lived, a wonder gleam
That gave to outcast faces brows more bright

Than Caesar's, where he stands in pallid
dream.

They shone with him, born blind, who never
knew

The joy of day till Christ unveiled its beam,

After the deathless words in which he drew
The barb of evil from its wound, revealing
The goad that prods self-righteousness, breaks
through

Our armor, drives life toward its healing.

VII.

Degrading failure, crime and hideous lust,
Life shows them as a beggar shows his scar.
Show me these things in action 'mid the dust,

Give me the eye to see them as they are;
Lo, they will bring a beauty to my sight
As solemn as the rising of a star.

"He lies," I hear, "behold him now in flight;
He will not stoop their burden to receive.
He calls this beauty, but he sees it blight."

Aye, blight it is, indeed. Do not believe
My words, for beauty still is where we find it;
But follow that with me, we may achieve
A knowledge of the flame that burns behind it.

VIII.

I rose up early; in the breathless heaven
I saw the still-bright star of morning shine
Alone, for its companions had been driven

Back to the deeps by day, whose lifted sign
Silvered the east. The ragged, leafy wood
Drew, with the barn's dark ridge, a broken line

Across the sky. As black as midnight's hood
Lay all below; above it, all was bright,
A lamp-lit, pale blue dome, while red as blood,

Appeared dawn's pinion tip spread, as for
flight,
Across the vale where bearded mists were blow-
ing.
The dew-wet grass seemed pallid in the light
That up and round the sphered world was flow-
ing.

IX.

I hear it said, "Dawn's beauty well may please;
But what has it to do with life's hard throes?
What part with it has failure, shame, disease?

Why speak of ugliness 'mid dawning's rose?"
Why speak of these? Though I may shun them
still,
No loathing soiled me in its cleansing flows,

Nor, while the glory of the dawn did fill
My memory, could I remember fear
Or count, for me, the direst fact as ill.

For, through the lifting of the light, drew near
A solemn Presence, deeper than all telling;
And while I still was clean it did appear
At every window of life's mighty dwelling.

THE SPIRIT OF THE METROPOLIS

A spirit is abroad to-night;
Its breath is in October's wind.
A sense of new lift, undefined,
Awakes my summer wearied mind
To zest and other eyes are bright
In Broadway's flood of golden light.

So thrilled I am with energy,
I look, and, looming 'gainst the sky,
Its seat a building lifted high,
A musing spirit sits. His eye
Is fixed as one who joys to see
New labors and great things to be.

In calendars, our New Year falls
'Mid way 'twixt winter's snowy wings.
New York's new day is that which brings
New life again and open flings
The future's doors, and once more calls
Her sons to markets, wharves and halls.

THE SONG OF A HERMIT THRUSH

The green and brown heart of the woods is here;
And the great trees fend, from the myriad feet
Of the summer winds, the quiet sweet,—
Its still, leafy atmosphere.
Bright mottling flecks of morning's gold
Are scattered on leaves and tree trunks, tall,
And, under the fern's green bending, fall
To brighten the springy mould.
But a deeper hush is born of the hush,
More potently still. Hark, a thrush! He
 sings
Like a spirit whose nesting is peace.
Increase, increase, O heart of me! Hold
This heavenly music I hear! It springs
From the crag where the root of my spirit
 clings
Like a pine's, and I thirst for its clear.
O singer, O seraph, O reedy-throat,
What master hath taught thee that piercing
 note?
Beneath it the turrets of heaven appear,
As high as the reach of a soul, and bright
With a shadowless gleam, that the sun's noon
 light
Of June's best day cannot bring to a sphere
Of shadow-like sorrow and night!

O sweet, sweet, sweet of the deep still woods,
Who spoke to me then? O solitudes,
Far deeper than dream, where the soul has
 birth,
Did ye open a door into earth?

He has ceased and the glory grows faint into
day;

It is real again, this heart of the woods—
Though the flight of the spirit had rapt it away;
Yet still, in the quiet, a sweetness broods.

Shadow-green are the ferns, shadow-brown is
the mould;

But the checkered coat of the forest old
Is bright with the morning's new-spun gold.

FACTORY POEMS

I.

THE FIRST GOING-IN

Under the golden wings of April's light,

Waiting new life, new beauty, the world lies;
In me spring's longing, waking eager flight

In birds, a new adventure satisfies.

New work awaits me and the sidewalk streams
With crowds that bear me with them on my

way;

Through life's expansion in me, old earth seems
As freshly made as at the primal day.

Spring's joy I leave outside the great works'
gate,

Nor once look back, reluctant; for the hour
That brings the soul new needs doth new create

A spring that puts eternity in flower

With fruitful blossoms, fairer, nearer, filled
With joys from which the soul its home doth
build.

II.

AT THE END OF DAY

Before experience has come to guide,

The novice still, his tread-mill hours must
pay;

So I, to dull, mechanic labors tied,

Watch wearily to greet the end of day;
Then evening comes; its quiet is a boon;

Its beauty is a miracle of rest.

One star shining and the veiled new moon

Seems but a fairy dream in the dim west.

I pass out, with the others, through the gate,

Not wholly cleansed, as yet, from grime and
soil.

Life's greatness, nearness makes my heart
elate;

For, one among ten thousand men who toil,
I might touch this one, that one, each would be
Somewhat myself, and it seems good to me.

III.

THE MACHINE SHOP

Soulless it seems, this realm of iron and glass
With haze-deep reaches. Down the track
between
Rows of mechanic monsters now doth pass
A train of freight cars. Yet from each
machine
Rises a rhythmic sound that strives to charm
My sense with meaning, while, with listless
power,
Long, heat-blued shavings, by its steady arm
Are curled from snoring metal, hour by hour.
How wide a little space is—here, in view,
Float the vast cities, vessel-peopled seas,
Great ships at wharves, Andean ranges blue,
Prairies, plantations, hive-like factories;
For East to West that cutting tool doth knit,
Coldly unconscious, with each swing of it.

IV.

OVERTIME

All day the flowing belts clapped rhythmic
hands,
Broad palmed on whirling pulleys; subtle
power
Pulsed through the brushes, till like instant
brands,
They glowed and darkened; then the closing
hour
Slackened the belts that ran with loosened grips
And stopped; but ours, that we might not de-
lay

Electric sinews built for Russia's ships,
Swept on the while we added to our day.
Past midnight still the motors were in cry,
Like wintry elves—scarce sleepy eyes could
see
The gauging needles—then, with cadent sigh,
They ceased and silence wrapped us utterly.
We step without the gate and, lo, are drawn
Into the coming glory of the dawn.

V.

THE WINDOW OF THE TESTING SHOP
The shop's a nightmare pen. Along it glides
The crane, an uncouth, servile jhin, that spins
A chain with hook of steel. And on all sides,
Blue vapors rise and never-ending dins.
But at the further end of it a stair
Leads upward past a window whose wire
screen
Lets in a breath of meadow-sweetened air,
Lets out the sight to summer's world of
green.
And there I lingered for a moment near
The brightly pictured meadow trees to see,
My brother of the plow at work, and hear
Faint, silver-sweet, a finch's melody.
The brick walls were dissolved and clank and
pound
Were hushed in that ethereal sweet sound.

VI.

THE DIVINE FIRE
Under continued noise and sweaty heat,
I asked, "My soul, art thou content to lie
Pent up in narrow bounds that quickly beat
Earthward, each eagle thought that longs to
fly?"

But, quick, a motion did my soul reprove;
It stirred me to look up, and did reveal,
Through twelve strong men that bent as one to
move,
From lagging start, a sluggish weighted
wheel,
That life was bound that it itself might know;
That life was love and love the fire divine
In poet and in man—from tautest bow
The fleetest arrow wings. “Life’s fiery wine
Defends itself,” I said. Earth sees the cup
But heaven the element it holdeth up.

VII.

AN AUTUMN MORNING

A cup of golden beauty was this morn
Spilled from the azure east. The light lay
glad
On autumn fields, and if the faint, far horn
That Dian winds I heard, I was not mad;
For I was pressing so that prison bar,
Eye never sees, but heart full-often feels,
That fairy revel called me near and far
And all the fields were crossed by golden
wheels.
In waves, the joy of the Hesperides
Besieged the factory whose gates were
thrown
Wide to receive the groups and companies
Who hurried, and I with them; so was
shown
Only day’s lovely dawn to me. I know
Naught of the other hours, if sunlight lay
More brightly still or chilling winds did blow
Across the blue of heaven the cloudy gray.
But that one hour let through a joyous gleam
From endless day beyond the gates of dream.

VIII.

THE IRON FOUNDRY

Ever the new! In this strange, littered place,
Volcanic, of gray drift and fires that roar,
New worlds are being formed by a young race
Of gods who, out of glowing vessels, pour
New-molten iron, the old gods soon will claim:
For iron is nature's memory—it grips
Hard on to what it holds;—but when lithe
flame,
The wrestler, bends back its fingers, slips
The treasure down, strange, living gold that
flows
In streams of yellow light, while from it
rise—
Freed fancies—ere again the fingers close,
In fountains, fiery winged butterflies:
And lo, the old takes on the new desire
Of Prospero, Man, through Ariel, his fire.

IX.

BEAUTY

There is a beauty near us; it doth shine
Upon us, through life's withered stock and
seems
A present budding of the world divine.
Hills, meadows, and the still, reflecting
streams,
Birds, flowers and all the human heart holds
dear,
The very hammers that by men are swung
Are half eternal, and, at times, I hear
In voice of whirling wheels a spirit tongue
That pleads with soul their beauty to make
plain.
I cannot serve two masters; these bright hues
Will fail—a talent hid—if I remain,

And if I go, a present good I lose;
So I, uncertain, neither go nor stay,
But, still my fear against my love I weigh.

X.

THE CROWD SPIRIT

From the bright shops flows forth the evening
stream,

Deep with ten thousand souls, now in the
light

Beneath the arc-lamp spheres of crystal gleam,
Now shadowed by the sharp-tipped wings of
night.

Hushed by the winter evening, breathless-still,
That hides the mild beginning of the snow,
Few speak aloud; but voice and foot-fall fill
The place with sound, as when great waters
flow.

From near the gate awakes a long halloo;
Far back, 'tis echoed; then it jumps from tens
To scores. "What start they now? What
would they do?"

I ask, as each wild increment impends.
Old heads rush in to check it, and, once more,
The tide flows out as silent as before.

XI.

AFTER PROMOTION

To rise from shop to office desk was sweet,
With pleasant labors done with grimeless
hands

And prospect widening around the seat
Of titan Commerce, reaching to far lands;
But, there, without intrigue or that sharp play
Of horn and shoulder that doth win the
prize,

Or the good home-sap that from day to day

Permits the spruce of native root to rise,
I was, by daily growth around me, shent,
Though beauty more and more my heart did
thrill;
Yet, discontented, still I was content,
With being left behind, for naught could still
The voice that long within my soul had cried:
"Here lingers one that had his lord denied."

XII.

A VISION OF LIFE

I have grown strong; this morning, wet with
dew,
Two tulips—they were just outside my door,
A yellow cup, a red—held each a hue,
Flame-like, of beauty never theirs before,
Of beauty that was joy, a joy whose sweet
Gave me back beauty, beauty's life to prove;
Workward, I passed the city's meanest street,
But did not see a face God could not love.
Nor did the lowly, mean things longer seem
Clothed, as of old, in poverty to me;
But, freed from pity, were enriched with gleam
And grandeur by our human destiny.
Though I should lose this vision, can I lose
Its truth? For it and not the world I choose.

XIII.

POST-CLIMAX

Where fear alone gives cause for fear, I fear,
Because of fear denied; I know not why.
The world has crowns for courage; yet I hear,
Far off, the laughter even where I lie.
Oh cool, green grasses, round my hiding face,
By frolicing, May-children breezes blown,
Smooth ye this rumpled page of my disgrace,
Where now the picture of my fear is shown.

And sweet-faced Mohawk Valley, now, if ever
Thou hast been kind to me, lift thou again
That smile whose beauty never failed to sever
And coax my heart away from former pain;
Then to the lonely paths for which I yearn—
Southward, to meet the mountains I shall turn.

XIV.

THE EASTERN SLOPE.

Three days I've been within the mountain
passes

And piney glens where holy shadows lay,
Sat near while sunlight danced on meadow
grasses,

And talked with noble men along the way;
Three days the mountains have my path de-
fended,

Like towering waves, with crests of trees and
sod.

They might have rolled—so billow-like sus-
pended—

Beneath my feet and borne me up to God.
And, now, the eastern slope behind me lift-
ing,

Builds up to heaven in the green, fading
light;

Across my path the starry darkness, drifting,
Hides not the way that, through the present
night,

It takes to greet the morning. Though I've
known

Deep holes of fear, I have in stature grown.

PERE JOGUES

If dreams, that on the shades of night
Are pictured, prophesy aright,
Then surely did Pere Jogues see,
Through eyes of sleep, deep destiny.

For while on Huron couch of moss
He slept, he saw, by light of dreams,
Out of the Iroquois, a cross
Come toward him over lakes and streams.

As ever, when a vision makes
Its message real, the dreamer wakes,
He started. Boding cross and light
Passed from the shadows of the night.
But sleep, though he was calm and still
Broke not again his wakeful mood;
He heard far off the whip-poor-will,
He heard the voices of the wood.

Scarce seen, it was so faint and thin,
A breath of misty light, light crept in
O'er glade and pool; then, flushing through
The great trees, dawned the morning hue.
Anon, the full sun's golden light
Was flung in level beams to bless
The leafy ways all dewy bright;
'Twas day in the deep wilderness.

'Twas day, and strange in that wild dell,
Was heard the tinkling of a bell;
But there a wee bark chapel stood,
Served by the mission brotherhood.
To them Pere Jogues told his dream;
They asked: "And was it black and tall,
This cross?" "Like ebon did it seem?"
He said: "'T would crucify us all."

Gravely each looked at each; no name
So woke in Huron eyes a flame
Of fear and hate implacable
As Iroquois; no scourge more fell
They knew than were those cruel, strong,
Revengeful lords of wood and lake;
Relentless as the year is long;
In ambush, cunning as the snake.

They asked, but who of dreams can know?
Ere long, Pere Jogues turned to go
Homeward across the lakes, to ask
More helpers in his noble task.
Awhile, between the blue and blue,
Safe hidden by the reaches wide,
His frail barks, to the steersmen true,
Light lifting, brushed the foam aside.

Twice twelve times did the day-star faint
Above their way and dawning paint
Water and sky, before their eyes,
Saw the old, freindly landmarks rise.
But there, from where green rushes hid,
Swam out an Iroquois canoe.
Another quick behind them slid;
No flight availed between the two.

The smoke puffs greyed in morning light;
The startled water birds took flight.
Soon bleeding on the rushes lay
Those wounded who along the way
Would fail. They were of peace assured.
The rest, their fortune not so kind,
Foreknew what must be long endured,
Ere they as calm a bed could find.

Through rough woods lay the southward trail,
And glens where daylight seemed to fail.
Now openings would show the blue,
Or sunbeams find a passage through,
As though to show how sunlight fell
In France, on lane or garden fair,
Or convent walk where solemn bell
Tolled the calm hours of praise or prayer.

Far, far away lay cloistered ways
With chaplet years of quiet days;
Each high day celebrating some
Great saint or noble martyrdom;
But in the dim, foreboding wood,
Removed from symbolizing stole
And blood-red robe, sweet truth renewed
The peace in good Pere Jogues' soul.

The way was rough with thorny spines,
And, like a host with spears, the pines.
Both thorn and splinter pierced the blood;
A red trail followed through the wood.
Pere Jogues bravely onward strode,
And scarcely did his burden feel;
Yet sighed 'neath some companion's load;
The blow he witnessed made him reel.

Sweet peace the Mohawk Valley fills;
In blue, it watches from the hills.
Beyond a rippled, silvery bend,
They saw the town, their journey's end;
But, O, the horde of hags and braves
That from the grim enclosure pressed,
With shrill cries under brandished staves:
"Come, let the captives be caressed!"

Turn from this passion. Who can tell
How looks the fire fiend when his hell
Lets loose? Yet how forget those eyes
Bent near in torture glee, or cries
Flung shrieking, till the sickened mind
Sees, in its pain, as through a haze,
Earth reeling, ere that peace it find
That swoon upon the body lays?

Then comes delirium's wild night,
Haunted by pain and dreadful sight
Of torch and knife and painted face,
Till cold dawn wakens. Strange the place
Where the weak, tortured spirit seeks
Remembered friends and finds—the tribe.
All this Pere Jogues knew; then weeks
Of slavery with blow and gibe.

Yet through the whispering isles came strength
To say: "Thy will be done." At length
For savage pride, in Albany
The Mohawks let the Burgers see
Their French slave. Chance of freedom sweet
Seemed near; he prayed it might not slip
Unfruitful. The wide village street
Showed on the stream below, a ship.

The Burgers looked; then pity moved
Their hearts; but when his words had proved
How great his soul was, many a cheek
Grew red to see him, nobly meek,
Thus treated. For he bore so well
His pain that at their doors, a slave
Of savages, he still could tell
His story with a spirit brave.

'Twixt them and France lay many a thorn,
And yet, to see him so forlorn,
Yet brave, the bars aside it swept;
And, while the gin-full Mohawks slept,
They freed him. Then, with crafty play
Of search, they stilled the quick surmise;
The while Pere Jogues trembling lay
Among the wee ship's merchandise.

The winged north wind set him free;
Soon, on the lonely, white-capped sea,
Thankful, each night he laid his head
On coiled ropes, a grateful bed,
Nor cared how wintry cold the wind.
For just beyond the ocean's rim,
Was France; and there he soon would find
Loved faces that would welcome him.

Soon sweet through all, his soul was France;
His home, its trees and green expanse
Of fields, and sweet the windows bright
With saintly faces. And the rite
In which from heaven the spirit gains
Refreshment, life, was rich increase.
And was it strange, if, after pains,
His heart was glad of cloistered peace?

But night with darkness deep is filled;
With dreams and visions night is stilled.
Across his slumber sweeps a dream,
He hears the tortured victim scream.
He, too, is bound. Hot pain runs through
His limbs. The brands against him press.
He wakens, bathed in clammy dew;
His cell holds all the wilderness.

In fear, with every sense employed,
He reaches groping through the void.
Quickly his narrow wall he feels,
Then finds his prie-dieu and kneels,
Asking God's ruth for souls that die
So piteously in heathen night.
Then stops and trembling cries: " 'Tis I,
I, Lord, that from them hold Thy light."

The sweat drops bead his face again.
His vivid mind sees all the pain
His heart is blind to. Fain to say,
"I go," fear counsels him to stay,—
Fear of the torture and despair;
E'en though his body feed the flame,
Of an effective service there,
To teach the Mohawks Love's high name.

And yet when golden morning beams,
And sweetly on Christ's picture streams,
Love, like an ocean, whelms his fears
And wells up through his soul in tears.
"Thou goest before me, Lord, I go."
At length his heart its voice has found.
Far off he hears: "Come thou, for lo,
Yonder, a martyr thou art crowned."

* * * * *

By dawn and sunset touched with rose,
A silver stream, the Mohawk flows;
Now resting quiet as the blue
Beside the hills, now rushing through
Sharp crags. Its valley seems to hold
Great joys. These scenes Pere Jogues' eyes
Last looked on. The fair hills were gold
And red and green with autumn dyes.

The wild has gone; an open land
Shows rounded fields on every hand,
And fertile flats along the stream
Where harvests in their season teem.
And where he died at Auriesville,
Now thousands come to bend the knee
Before his shrine upon the hill,
And pray within its sanctity.

And there I stood one autumn day
Watching the pilgrims kneel to pray.
Though many were of lighter mind,
Yet some devoutly seemed to find
Before the shrine increase of power.
I watched. I did not bend the knee;
Yet something in the place and hour
Loaned man a greater dignity.

LOKE THE DESTROYER

Fear is of Loke, sprite of fire,
Giver of wisdom at the pyre,
Giver of wisdom through the blaze
That lights a coward's closing days.

Yet the heart of earth is fire—
'Tis no burning of a pyre
Makes the warmed spring time sweet,
Helps the growing of the wheat.

Flame of fear is but a lie
Open to a Siegfried's eye.
Fear must die before we see
Life's now, its immortality.

LEGEND OF THE GUARDED DOOR

I.

“God bless this house, from thatch to floor;
The twelve apostles guard the door;
Four angels watch above my bed,
Two at the foot, two at the head.”

This was once a maiden’s prayer,
Said when twilight washed the air,
Under leafy ways, with green,
And the fire-fly lights were seen.
And when this her prayer was said,
Wrapped within her snowy bed,
Like a flower in April snows,
Gently she her eyes would close.
Gently she would sink to rest,
Like a sygnet in its nest,
Whom no mother wing would keep
Loving charge of through her sleep;
For Death’s bow had winged an arrow,
Leaving there an unfilled sorrow.
Yet, when night-drowned pines were whirring
In the winds she had no fears.
Had no dread of evil stirring;
For the stars with holy spears
Pierced the corners of the wood,
Deep and full of dream, that stood
With its shadow-laden boughs
Drooping round her little house.

Thirteen seasons she had seen
Springtime, crowned with melodies,
Passing, leave upon the trees
Films of garnet, veils of green,
 Buds of gold,
 That unfold
Dream that ’gainst the light doth lean.

Every year a sweeter grace
Springtime left upon her face.
Often, they who passed would say,
"She is like a flower of May,"
And no sweeter flowret grew.

The bright summer mornings through,
Just her golden sill within,
She with busy hands would spin
At her wheel. The birds would wing
Thither, at its call, and sing
To its humming; music sprung
There in native, sweetest tongue.
There the sun's most golden shower
Splashed on thatch and sill and bower.
Soon, by solemn, dewy night,
When the forest trees were still,
When the stars' majestic light
Deeps in deeps of blue did fill,
Passing townsfolk saw how bright
Shone her house among the leaves,
Saw strange men beneath its eaves.

They—how could their dull eyes know
Heavenly beauty when they'd pass
Heedless by the breathing glow
Of the glow-worm in the grass?—
Saw there but an earthly gleam,
Angel light to them was dream.
Was it strange that eyes that see
Naught in night-filled skies above
Of the heavenly mystery
Bending over them in love,
Made apostles seem to be,
To those men—so sight doth change—
Foreigners whose robes were strange?

Yet perhaps the wonder near
Quickened into joyous fear,
Opened with its love each heart.
And perhaps they did not part
From it ere its beauty wrought
Something human in their thought.
Yet, on telling how they'd seen
In the maiden's house a light,
Like a star-lamp's very bright,
Reaching through the forest green,
Breaking through the lace of leaves,
And the strange men round its eaves,
All the wonder that remained
In their hearts grew faint and waned.

Some, as wounded by it, grieved,
Sadly were perplexed. A few
Almost joyously believed
More than had been told as true.
Ready minds to find a stain
Made their own heart-soilure plain.

II.

Morning came, it was a boon,
In her gladdest mood, of June.
Still-winged clouds were in the blue.
Perfume breathing, rose the dew.
Sweet the sunlight, sweet the wind.
It was strange, indeed, to find
That fair day, whereas before
Smiling welcome filled each door,
Every doorstep now was cold,
Spite of summer's warming gold.

Full of joy, as one would bring
Pleasant news, or some rich thing
Sure to win a welcome sweet,

Did the maiden's care-free feet,
Press along the forest way,—
Now in shadows green, or bright
With the flood of morning's light,
Dappled now where golden day,
Under gently swaying leaves,
Light and shadow interweaves.

As she passed, each living thing,
Bounding squirrel, bird on wing,
Seemed to her as though it felt
The same joy of life that dwelt
In herself so glad and free.
Day was just a treasury.

All around, from glade to glade,
Rang the notes the thrushes made,
Sweetest melody until
Greater sweetness made them still;
For, behind a leafy screen,
A shrill veerie sang, unseen,
Notes that never could have come
Save from fair Elisium,
Save from fields of asphodel.

Like a statue, 'neath a spell,
Captured there, her soul in dream,
Carried out on music's stream,
Gazed on silver fields of bliss
Where no sorrow ever is,
Where no night is and no time;
Saw the joyous spirit clime
Just outside the door of day.

When it dreamed itself away
Through the golden summer wood,
There upon the path she stood,

Hand on heart as half in pain;
But it did not come again.
Thoughtfully she passed along,
Musing of the veerie's song;
Crossed the brook upon the bridge
Where the land lay in the sun,
Toward the rolling slope whose ridge
Held three oaks, a bastion,
Twinkling in the summer wind,
With the blue, blue sky behind.

There the princess had been kept,—
Here the scaley dragon slept,
Waiting for the knight who came,
Plume and spur and sword of flame,
Prancing o'er the silvery field
With the sunlight on his shield.
All the daisies saw that sight—
Hearts of gold and petals white—
'Twas the madness of romance
Made them toss their heads and dance.

In a hollow's long, damp grass,
Slender stems, like Venice glass,
Sheltered from the wind, held up
Many a burnished buttercup.
Lamps of gold for places dim,
Lamps the happy fairies trim,
Temple lamps they seemed to be;
But she did not wait to see.
Mortal sight was never meant
For a fairy sacrament.

Down the vale the village spire,
With its vane that flashed like fire,
Looked above the orchard trees.
Now and then the changing breeze

Caught the cheery anvil's ring;
Far and wide the notes did fling.

Peace along the village street
Smiled on cottage, hedge and tree.
Children's voices, rising sweet,
Notes of youthful jollity,
Ringed the fancied mulberry bush.
Hearts were in the merry play
And the dancing, singing ring
Ended in a laughing rush.

Monday was their washing day
And the other days would bring,
Ironing and wax candlemaking,
Spinning, sewing and bread baking,
Till on Sunday they would pray.

When she came, a bright-faced lad
Ran to her with greetings glad;
But they caught him quick away
Even from her outstretched arms.
Mutely, conquered by surprise,
Thus she stood, her troubled eyes
Asking, Have I aught that harms?
Questioning her heart to know
Why she had been treated so.
When she slowly turned away,
Something had bereft the day.
Cut by sorrow's keenest edge,
Slow she passed along the hedge,
All unconscious in her grief,
That her hand had plucked a leaf.

The kind vicar by the hand
Led her to his garden seat,
Trellis screened, in shadows bland,

Near his lettuce, bean and beet.
Freely did she tell her pain.
All her life to him was plain.
And no flowret ever grew
In a glade that was more free
From all thought of wrong than she;
Never dancing bell of blue,
Buttercup or marigold
Could a simpler tale have told.
So he blest her, bade her go
And a face of gladness show.

III.

Yet when winds of midnight blew,
When the grass was wet with dew,
Candles out and fires all dead,
Wakeful echoes heard the tread
Of the vicar bound to see
For himself this mystery.

When he'd left the village shadows,
When he reached the open meadows,
Owlet, far away, did make,
Softly, so that none should wake,
Sounds that pictured the still sweep
Of the drowsy realm of sleep.
Silver-faint, the starlight slept
On the fields where clover bloom
Lifted up its sweet perfume,
Till the soft night winds that swept
Breathed of it; but night was gloom
To the vicar and not fair—
Doubting love had brought him there.

Soon the little house was near,
Starlight-filled among the leaves,
And each window, outlined clear,

Showed the strange men round its eaves.
"Can this story, hard, be true?"
Asked he. Sad doubt pierced him through,
Till he saw that evil men
Never moved like these; and then
Weakness trembled in his knees:
One bore sword and one bore keys.
Chilling as a wind he felt
Wonder near him and he knelt.

The apostles passed from sight,
Melted strangely into night
As he watched them, though the gleam
Lingered, stranger than a dream.
Through the wood awoke no sound;
All the wood was holy ground.
Calm the silver wonder fell
Radiant on grass and leaf,
Calmly did its beauty tell
Of a beauty past relief
That it sprung from. Soon 'twould go;
Quickly must such gladness pass
From earth's mortal leaf and grass.
How the vicar longed to know,
Face to face, the beauty given
Those who brought the light from heaven!

As he rose, across his way
Gleamed a ghostly sword blade. "Stay!"
Spake a solemn voice. "This light
Doth endanger mortal sight.
Near Damascus, long ago,
And at noon tide's brightest glow,
Did the glory thou wouldest see
Shine with dazzling light on me,
And they led me from it blind.
Fearest not some harm in kind?"

Yet the vicar could not stay,
For the longing in his heart.
Did the dwelling melt away?
Were the stout walls torn apart?
Bloomed the angels in his sight,
Great and beautiful and bright.
And the holy joy that moved them
Pictured heaven to his mind.
It was well he greatly loved them,
Else he had been stricken blind,
When at length himself he found
Kneeling far-off on the ground.

Spirit, through the wonder light
Reaching, touched his inner sight.
Now, as though he had been blind
In the past, his soul did find
Something just as strange and fair
Reaching to him everywhere
Through earth's beauty. Dawning came
Brightening with golden flame
Hill and meadow, making bright
Roof and spire with winged light.
Till that hour he ne'er had known,
Of the sky, how blue it shone.
Never seemed the grass so green,
Ne'er so lovely smiled the scene.

Now the maiden never knew
What great guards, the darkness through,
Spread their wings above her bed,
Two at the foot, two at the head.
Never, waking in the night,
Saw she the celestial light;
Ne'er heard voices sweet above.
Yet she knew that God's great love
Had her always in its care,
Day and night and everywhere.

TO THE MAKER OF DAYS

O Thou who call'st unnumbered days,
Nor makest two of them the same,
Lo, each is like a spirit face
Made bright with heavenly flame.

This cloud-calmed wintry day is sweet;
The world is lying white and blue
Toward snowy hills, and for my feet
All ways are made anew.

I hear a sweet-voiced chickadee
Send out across the quiet snow
A heart's clear praises unto Thee,
That doth Thy bounty know.

For Thou, in love, a world didst make,
And Thou didst leave a world unmade,
That we might labor for love's sake
In sunlight or in shade.

And he who working loveth true,
Who looketh up Thy love to see
In simple trust, as children do,
Becomes Thy child to Thee.

FOUR GREAT GODS

BUDDAH

Beneath an arbor, built beside
A river's plashing, mighty tide,
The pale-green shadows wrest a boon
Out of the burning heart of noon.

A double line of cedar trees,
Rough green, that show no passing breeze,
On each side, quiet keeps a path
That scarcely fifty paces hath,

Reaching from arbor to a hill
Where rocks are spattered by a rill,
And which, though low-lands swoon in sheen
Of noonday, lifts to shadows green.

Above it, pine trees hide a spring,
Where shrill birds morn and evening sing,
And naught breaks noontide's quiet mood,
Save the wee creatures of the wood.

On the rough instep of the hill,
In place made vocal by the rill,
So old the years have turned him green,
A marble Buddah sits serene.

Where shadow is, beneath a tree
Before him, bends a devotee.
His head is resting on the ground;
He has forgot the water's sound;

He has forgot both pain and bliss;
He has forgot the life that is.
Back through the beasts, back through the sod
He reaches, groping after God.

On the dark path o'er which man came,
Stumbling, he calls a mighty name.
God knoweth well that shadowed way;
From thence he bringeth into day

A shadow, dark as night itself:
Death, smiler at man's powers and pelf.
From whence that path comes here He knows
And why, and whither hence it goes.

The prayer prays and close beside,
Where leaves and tangled grasses hide,
A cobra holds its hood of doom—
The stream falls plashing from the gloom.

And still the quiet prayer prays
And counts nor seasons, nights nor days.
But reaching up, he seeks to find
The circle of God's mighty mind.

ORMOZD

When through bright meadows Hesper rides,
Night comes whose flowing garment hides
A shadow multitude of dreams
That live not under Phosphor's beams.

Upon a hill that lifts above
A valley, stirred by hate and love,
Before a granite fane there stands
A magus with uplifted hands.

To the morning star, his song is done;
He waiteth for the rising sun.
A silver light full-floods the blue;
The east has taken tender hue.

“Behold,” he sings, “how Ormozd breaks
Through night and all the heaven shakes.
His royal robes are flung before.
Awake, ye peoples, and adore!

“In glory beams he hides his face,
His gaze is into boundless space;
The royal mantle, purple, sweet,
Falls, simply, downward to his feet;

“And see, how bright upon the stream,
Like flame of gold, his ankles gleam.”
So grand and so sublimely pure,
He can no more the sight endure;

He falleth prostrate on the ground,
And waiteth for the trumpet’s sound,
The music and the mellow dins
Of cymbals and of violins,

The rush of hosts that with elan
Flail the dark tribes of Ahriman.
The valley stirs and loves and hates;
Awhile the prostrate magus waits,

Then rises. It is but the day;
The usual sun is on his way.
His heart will not admit despair;
He turns and trims his fire with prayer.

ODIN

Rare beauty falls from evening sky
On meadow green and mountain high.
A human longing seems to be
In the vesper sparrow’s melody.

Across the pasture bars, at gaze
Upon the sunset's dying rays,
A farm boy leans—before his eyes
The splendors of a vision rise.

'Twas there last night and through the day
The hours went lumbering away;
And, now, the light behind the hills,
Again his splendid vision fills.

Strong men and bards and ladies fair
And ships and palaces are there—
These for to-day and, then, the march
To Valhall, over rainbow arch.

The battle in the crimson west
Has called him and he cannot rest.
His ears have caught the ringing song
Dominion singeth to the strong.

*Strength is a god and well may take
Whatever things have been, and make
New forms of them, of perfect use
To build what glorious life he choose.*

*Nor, god-like, will he count the price,
Though like a god's the sacrifice;
But smiles at conquest in his hands,
As Vikings laugh on flashing brands.*

*And he, whom the great gods will own
Their son, must stand like them alone,
Bravely to build against the shock
Of Fimbul winds and Ragnarock.*

CHRIST

Like useful vessels made of clay,
Above earth's green, two chimneys, gray,
Lift up and heaven's blue provoke
With globes of thick, bitumen smoke.

Before our eyes accept the gloom
Within the forge's filmy room,
But furnace mouths, like plaques of light,
We see and metal heated bright.

Then faces and strong arms, that glow
In the firelight, passing to and fro,
The cranes and heavy tools among,
And that all workmen here are young.

Outside, the meadowed hills are bright
And goodly fair in summer's light,
And bob-o-lincoln's song is sweet
Above the emerald of the wheat.

He breasts the air on quiet wings,
Over the roadside field and sings
His melody. The sky is blue
And softly clouds are creeping through.

Within, the noisy hammers fall,
Iron ringing iron, and foreman call.
Strong shoulders backward swing and strain
To give its sinews to the chain.

*My life to thee and thine to me
And thou in me and I in thee.
How soul is victor over pain!
Clang, clang, we pound upon the chain.*

Day looketh toward the setting sun.
The whistle blows and work is done.
A thousand men, but half-elate,
Wend homeward, trooping through the gate.

And some are free and laugh in pride
And some are still preoccupied,
Some bitter are with what they bear
And some are heavy with despair.

Ah, me! Yet some have eyes serene,
That seem assured that God doth mean,
Through life's perplexing ills, to prove
And give some deeper word for love.

THE CITY-BOUND

I.

O day, O golden sunlight, is it true?
Or is this room with these long desks a dream?
The many different heads bent o'er them seem
Phantoms of failure! What hard fate doth mew
These men addressers here the long hours
through,
And at a wage proud Vulcan's sons would deem
Scant for adventures under hope's bright beam?
Does the world lack man's work for men to do?
The world, it lieth bright beneath thine eye;
Thou seest river, forest, farm and dale,
And all the ways where brave men win and
fail,
The troubled ocean, plain and mountain high.
Hark, in my dream I hear the rap again
Of sunlight arrows on the window pane.

II.

Life is the soul's and some regard this place
As monks their cloister, while, it seems to me,
They set forth *Youth and Age, A Mystery*,
Full of deep meanings. Here clear eyes might
trace
Life's old adventures stamped on many a face,
Refinements, weaknesses. My *vis-a-vis*,
At times while writing, mutters bitterly
Of money in the bank; and there's a grace
Round my old neighbor's lips that maketh plain
A heart in disappointment growing kind;
And here youth's troubled eyes show forth a
mind
Startled by finding life's quick nerve of pain.
O living gleam, thou knowest why I am here.
Save me with sight! Clothe me with vision
clear!

III.

I asked, Is this a trap that life hath set
With sharp advice, that laggard youth might
know

The difference between the ringing blow
That thrills a pioneer and the dull fret
Of failure in old age? A stone to whet
Youth's resolution? Then a glance did show
That life by no such simple rule doth go.
Grey-haired incompetence is here; and yet
Some here have lips once salty with the spray
Of great adventure where life's brave hearts
lead,
And fates they could not change have barred
the way;
And some have been too human to succeed.
With horn and shoulder at the trough, and
hence,
Though saving naught, show the more compe-
tence.

IV.

To-day, when, palest blue, those buildings tall,
That seem set on a hill, might have been rose
With morning's promise, and the firstling flows
Of day's great tide were passing City Hall,
Through chilling winds, the snow began to fall
In icy particles; the hats of those
Who came in last were white. And now the snows
That beat in gusts against the window call
Pictures that float before me while I write:
The snowy train-man fighting winds that
freeze,
The schooner, icy prowed and decked with white,
Plunging all day in frothy, silk-green seas.
Sphered from the winter wind and bitter foam,
The cosy warmth makes this place seem a
home.

V.

Down in the purple street, the windows, bright,
Are trimmed with pine and holly green and
red,

And, as glad Christmas Eve grows deeper,
spread

Their glow on faces glad; and joys excite
New joys, that brighter make the season's
light.

Street beggars threw where early thousands
sped

Upon their homeward ways. Here, lamps
still shed

Their beams, like tents, beneath the edge of
night,

Above day's busy working-hours; and when
It was announced, our closing Christmas Day,
One, quick up-glancing, asked in bitter play:
"How shall we buy our Christmas dinner
then?"

Thereat some laughed, none answered; and it
seemed

That in the room a moment's grandeur
gleamed.

A WINTER SUNSET, RIVERSIDE DRIVE

This scene was set for beauty; soft and white,
Or blue or touched with rose, lies the new
snow

On the wide banks and on each creeping floe
Of ice, borne by the tide, round which the
bright

Sunset has cast a net—O joyous sight!—
Of gold, green, purple, bronze and ruby-glow.
Glad faces pass, and dome and dwelling show,
Under pale heaven, the touch of tender light.
O thou art fair, New York! Thy lowliest hall
Is robed in wondrous garments of the sky
By evening's lavish hand. The musing eye
Meets stairs that leap from roof to tower and
call

Youth's dream from narrow street to azure
wide,

While thou art sitting, beauteous as a bride.

ODE ON WAR

There is a fiery serpent, Pride; it sleeps
In the deep pits of mighty nations' hearts;
But ever, at its wind and moon, it creeps
Through senate chambers, pulpits, streets and
marts,

Unseen, except a flickering, bright tongue.
Yet, when it strikes, it makes the people mad;
It makes the press a flame. Then wildly rung
Are bells from tower to tower, while, glory-
clad,

Hate, like an angel, goeth down to war
With fifes that cry and drums around his car.

Serpents have been that worked much harm to
lands.

Great Pytho wasted Delphos' rocky shore
And he was killed; but not by gold-lined hands
Of ship-borne merchants, that there might be
more

Produce to barter for and greater gain
To traffickers. 'Twas from the sunbeam bow
Of gleam-haired Loxias, the shaft was flown
That pierced the python's head. Where he
was slain

A noble temple rose and hollow stone
Breathed prophecy from solemn deeps below.

There is a beast with dripping, snow-white
fangs,

The saber-toothed, whose lips and hairs are red
With the rich blood of youths. Amid the
clangs

Of brass and iron, he proudly rears his head
Like some harsh monarch who red war doth
wage

Around a burning town. Beneath his throat
And round his great and brightly mottled paw
The banners of proud nations sway and float,
Nations that march their sons to fill his maw.
The bloody tiger's name is Battle Rage.

Strong men have been who fought with beasts
and freed
Their kind from ravage, making once more
glad
Rich lands that, under some huge monster's
breed,
Lay burned with desolation, drear and sad.
And when they passed, no more the presence
filled
The vales with silent dread too deep for words;
Safe was the highway, safe the man who tilled
The native fields, and safe the flocks and herds.
Yet no war-fearing, weakling men were these;
But strong, red-blooded sons of Hercules.

There sits a tyrant at the hearth and home
Of every nation brandishing red spears,
A brazen fate that wills that news shall come
And chooses for this heart and that heart,
tears.

“Open this letter, for my hands are weak.
Who sends it from the front?” “Quick, read
this list.

The paper says four battleships were lost,
Six regiments destroyed. I dare not seek
Him with the slain beneath the gun-breathed
mist,
Nor with the strewn ones, by the billows
tossed.”

15

Yet, look upon the scroll of noble names,
That brightest shine in heaven and in earth.
How many have been forged in war's red
flames,
And, in its stress and strain, have proved their
worth!

I see great Washington upon his knees
At Valley Forge. I see that noble face
In whose sad kindness is forever shown
A people's sorrow. How much added grace
Has life since these great warriors of peace,
'Gainst whom, as blood-stained, little man did
moan!

And there, against the hills of morning, stands
Proud War, the red-robed tyrant. Under him
The deep-voiced thunders roll, and in his
hands

Flashes of levin gleam. The place grows dim,
As 'neath a leaden storm; but see, his eyes
Are white with madness, and his bony feet,
Shown through his wind-blown robe, are stark
as death,

Up to his ragged knees and swollen thighs,
Putrid with gangrene. The morning's sweet
Wind chokes beneath the burden of his breath.

O SWEET LITTLE VILLAGE

What pleasure more real, when our first youth
has flown,
Than to call back the days that our childhood
has known?
And what to my heart brings a happier dream
Than my childhood in thee, little town by the
stream?

CHORUS.

O town of my childhood, how many a joy
Was mine on thy meadows when I was a boy?
My heart knew thy beauty of tillage and tree,
O sweet, little village, my dream is of thee.

But where is the smithy? Within its wide door
The hammer sweet clamored—I hear it no
more.
Old meadows are closed where summer noon
shone;
New faces are here, but old faces are gone.

And where is the oak tree where often I
played?
Its great leafy head by the woodman is laid.
No more the mild breezes of summer will come
To sing in its branches and ruffle its dome.

O sweet, little village, time hurries away.
The glad hour of childhood what magic can
stay?
But my treasure in thee no fate can destroy
Nor dull the bright dream of when I was a
boy.

SWEET EMOGENE

Once a little girl I knew,
She was sweet as pleasant weather,
Bright as May, her eyes of blue,
O the days we walked together.

CHORUS

Emogene, sweet Emogene,
Never was another lassie
Quite so like a fairy queen.
O the days we walked together
Over meadows bright and green!

When the birds were in the sky,
Buttercups the fields adorning,
Often would I ask if I
Might not walk with her that morning.

And a buttercup of gold
Once I held, my heart a-flutter,
Underneath her chin; it told,
Plainly, she was fond of butter.

When, on daisy petals white,
Once she was my fortune telling—
“Loves me not, he loves me,”—bright,
In my heart the joy was dwelling.

Oft from meadow clocks we blew
Dandelion seed a-skying.
Little of their worth we knew
When we sent the bright hours flying.

FROM THE JAPANESE

I sat in my study reading,
In the solitude of night,
A story that showed life's beauty
When the world was fresh and bright.

I heard outside, in the garden,
The rivulet, sweet and clear,
Of a nightingale's song, bringing
The bright world strangely near.

I opened the lattice and listened;
The garden in silence lay;
I saw but the cold moon hanging
In the deep sky, far away.

COURTESY

Joiner of broken ends,
Smoother of tangled skeins,
Breathe thou where discord strains;
Lo, like a balm, it sends
The spirit of joy for a mile,
And work-a-day love with a smile.

Thou art the breath of love
Breathing its sweet desire.
Thou art the tune of the lyre
That friendship's sympathies move.
Who giveth thy melody wing
Awakens a heavenly string.

GENIUS

Blest son of genius, what high crowned day
Lifted thee up, new born, that all days hold
Thee as their ruler and before thee lay
Tribute of fruits and precious gems and gold?
What influence, God-given, gave to thee
Efficient strength and intellect and sight?
What weakens, shackles others, sets thee free;
Where others fail thy forehead greets the light.
God's dreams are seas and mountains. Thou
dost dream
Of ships and cities. Who from thy dream
take
Their dream, their work, thou as thyself doth
deem;
Who dreams not in thy dream thou must for-
sake.
Thrice blest, if thou like God true service give,
Thee and the land that sees thy great dreams
live.

PENIEL

No prayer that weakens, Lord, is wrung from
me;

Foot against foot, hand pressing hard on hand,
I struggle with Thee on the darkened sand,
Nor will relax, though night should lengthened
be.

Yet, for against the eastern sky I see
The lift of dawn, once more I make demand
For what Thine own heart best will under-
stand,

Seeing the power to struggle comes from Thee.
Bless me Thou must before I let Thee go;
Touch me Thou wilt; what mortal walks not
lame?

And yet immortal is the ruddy glow
That warms within my heart to burst in flame.
Thou needst not man's labor; it is I
That needs must struggle with Thee till I die.

FOUR LOVE POEMS

LOVE, LET ME WALK WITH YOU

Love, let me walk with you,
Love, let me silent be,
While the great stars fill the heaven above
With glimmering majesty.

God giveth the great stars names,
Sweet names we cannot know;
But, love, when I hear your footsteps near,
As light as the airs that blow,
They fill my heart with the joy of light
That is from eternity;
And my soul is glad of their mystic names,
When, love, you walk with me.

HAUNTED

Now April woods are bright with marigolds
And sunlight-arums green the marshy ground;
But, O, beyond flame colors or the sound
Of bluebird song, so ringing sweet it holds
Spring's very heart, across the grassy wolds
And through the woods, bright-leaved and gar-
net crowned,
The magic spell of one sweet name is wound
Through light and air, and winds me in its
folds.
'Tis here and everywhere, and can I say
The bending wood path hides her? Is she
there
Where the green meadow dips again away
Beyond the rise? There swallows in the air
Weave, eager-winged, the same sweet spell. It
makes
My heart grow limp with longing that it wakes.

IN NEW YORK

Lady, at hour of violet-washed air,
Just at the close of day, oft when I go
Where New York ladies, through the fading
glow,
Bring colors sweet and make the sidewalk fair,
By great shop windows and across the square,
Where wintry trees their purple branches show,
My heart's-hope thinks it sees thee; but I know
Its tricks too well to trust that thou art there.
And once or twice, upon the pounding street,
I've heard right close behind me, soft and
sweet,
A voice that thee, within me, pictured plain.
Then did my spirit tremble as in fear,
Perhaps from too much hoping and thou wast
near,
Perhaps from too well knowing hope was vain.

LIGHT WITHOUT WARMTH

To-night, I walk beneath the darkened pines
Where, through the opening branches, starry
spears
Seem, in their beauty, fain to reach the tears
My heart as fain would give. Bright o'er me
shines
Love's star of wonder; yet my soul divines,
In all its radiance no beam that cheers,
For, now, as in cold armor, it appears
Shorn of the light of love's majestic signs.
O stars, last night ye poured upon my heart
Fond hopes that for a while deceived my pain;
O stair of beauty, now so steep thou art
That, wingless, mounting up by thee were vain.
Love's windows, all agleam, seem but to be
Thrusting intruding darkness back on me.

COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS

Heaven's deep immortal fountains overflow
And sprinkle earth each night with holy dew.
Seven million mornings come, and still they
show

God's manna, ever fresh and ever new;
Yet life to us this picture doth unfold:—
One generation proves its faith as true;

The next one finds the manna filled with mould
And utters famished sighs; then comes the
third.

Hearing of mythic glory, given of old,

It proves it on God's face and lo, the
Word,

On which the world was founded, still is stand-
ing.

Truth is not pictured by a passing bird;
But still holds life through pinion-wide expand-
ing.

SONNET

A youth there was who, in his young man's pride,
And love of high adventure and of sound—
Such as Manilla Bay gave, half-way 'round
The world, to lift emotion like a tide—
Could not, in martial days, near fifes abide,
But 'gainst their shrill farewells, his heart
would leap,
So learned how joyous is the rhythmic sweep
Of marching with brave comrades at his side;
But where night-guardsmen see, o'er tropic
wave,
Faint purple lightning sweep or, through the
trees,
The impetuous sun fling wide dawn's mysteries,
A deeper joy the fair, loved banner gave.
Stirred first he was by love of stir and fame,
Then love of country warmed him like a flame.

AUTUMN

A mystical, deep-musing gladness fills
October's quiet! Lo, at close of day,
When, from the trees, the sun doth lift away
His golden beams, my raptured spirit thrills
At great, blue angels seated on the hills
In beauty, and, among the oak tree's fires,
Vague faces as of heavenly desires,
Whose presence all the leafy wild-wood stills.
For, as the water's calm reflecting shows
More beauty than the painted forest knows,
So, for I too am stilled, 'tis given to me,
Long as this hour of twilight shall endure,
To walk untrammeled in the company
Of mighty spirits, venerable and pure.

STARSET

O evening star, I saw thee, clear and bright,
Above the western hills. A fairy beam
Bent downward like a spear-shaft to the
stream,
And from its point a flimsy skein of light
Was woven on the waters, dark with night.
Thy silver splendor made the valley seem
Unreal, as though, far off, I slept and dream
Was holding more than earth before my sight;
For I was conscious of the presence near
Of beauty seldom seen and soon to go,
With such forgetful joy as mystics know
In their companion visions. Then the spear
Was lifted; thou didst set. The light that
shone
Returned to heaven. Wondering, I stood alone.

TO A FRIEND WITH "THE LIFE OF THE BEE"

This book from nature, for a quiet hour,
I send to you. Perhaps when noonday shines
With ardent beam on lake and margent pines,
You may seek out some shaded, mossy bower
For its perusal; or, when passing shower
Gives patter to your cabin's roof and pane
And sets the woodways dripping with the rain,
Find here a refuge from its chilling power;
For here are dewy fields and gardens warm
In morning sunlight, and the workers' tune,
Hummed busily, from flower to flower, at noon,
And the reverential buzzing of the swarm.
And somewhat else is here, atune to please
Your meditative walk beneath the trees.

TO A SUMMER BREEZE

Blow, summer wind, and make the branches
sway
Around this meadow brown, where Tim and I,
In the hot sun, are piling wide and high
Upon our wagon's arms this new-mown hay,
Sweet-breathed with the dried clover-tops of
May
And aromatic stems. 'Neath the blue sky
No leaf is stirring, and the butterfly
Is neither helped nor hindered on its way.
Blow, summer breeze; Tim says you ever shun
Sun-beaten meadows when the hay is made.
Breathe on this field and, when bright day is
done,
And dewy twilight on the hill is laid,
Here will be waiting many a sweet wing-load
To waft through lanes and down the quiet road.

ON THE CARIBBEAN SEA

Drift by, in all the forms you take,
Oh, great cosmogony of clouds !
The fingers of the winds awake
Fit music in the shrouds.

As waters slip along the keel,
From stem to stern, the hours slip by.
What weight they have I do not feel
Nor note them as they fly.

The east is touched with pink and gray;
The sun lifts up his glorious head.
Both sea and sky at close of day
Are doubly dyed with red.

And every day is opal fair
With rainbow hues both bright and clear.
If mermaid singeth anywhere,
She surely singeth here.

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